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PLOTINUS AND THE INTUITIVE TRADITION OF THE WEST (II)

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This is the second of a two-part inquiry into the contribution of Plotinus to Western intuitive philosophy. Plotinus's thought compares favorably with the mystical ideas of Indian philosophy, Buddhism, and Taoism, but Plotinus also stands in his own right as one of the most profoundly intuitive philosophers the West has ever produced. Part I of this article, published separately, concerned itself with (1) demonstrating how Plotinus's metaphysics can be related equally to theistic and nontheistic mysticisms, and (2) showing how Plotinus's views on the relationship between knowledge and discourse are relevant to contemporary problems of mysticism and language.[1] Part II, presented here, is devoted to the further tasks of (3) contrasting a "vertical," dualistic, and orthodox interpretation of Plotinus with a "horizontal," monistic, and mystical interpretation, and showing how the latter results in a more radically contemplative approach to religion, and (4) speculating on how Christianity could have developed in more intuitive directions had the medieval Church not, as it typically did, rejected a more "horizontal" perspective as heretical.

"Vertical" and "Horizontal" Interpretations of Plotinus. Thomas Michael Tomasic notes that there are two distinct ways of schematizing the relationships between Plotinus's three *hypóstases*:

> 1) as a vertically descending order or ordination with the One positioned topmost, *Noûs* emanating downward from, and subordinate to, the One, and *Psyché* emanating downward from and subordinate to, *Noûs* or 2) horizontally, as a geometrically conceived outward expansion of concentric circles from a center.[2]

Fig. 1: Vertical representation of the hypóstases

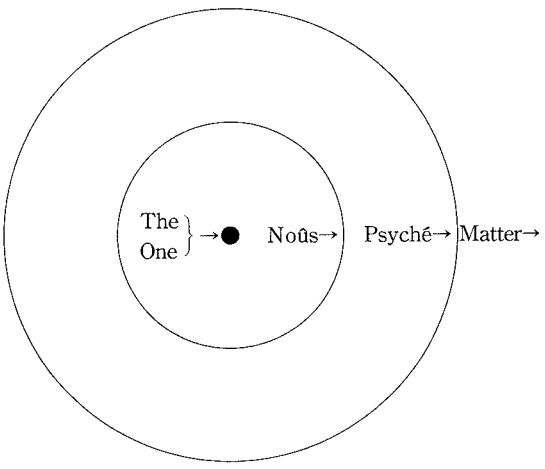

Fig. 2: Horizontal representation of the hypóstases

Figure 1 presents a schematization of the vertical interpretation, while Figure 2 presents a schematization of the horizontal interpretation. The image of the One as a center from which the other *hypóstases* emanate occurs repeatedly in the *Enneads*.(3) *Enneads* IV. 3. 17 has already been discussed in Part I of this article. Here, three additional passages providing clear examples of the circle imagery will be considered.

The first passage relates the circle imagery to Plotinus's metaphysics, showing how the One at the center is "beyond being."

> For because it [the One] is "beyond being," it transcends activity and transcends mind and thought. For to put it another way, one must assume the Good to be that on which everything else depends and which itself depends on nothing ; for so the statement is true that it is that "to which everything aspires." So it must stay still, and all things turn back to it, as a circle does to the centre from which all the radii come. The sun, too, is an example, since it is like a centre in relation to the light which comes from it and depends on it ; for the light is everywhere with it and is not cut off from it ; even if you want to cut it off on one side, the light remains with the sun.(4)

The sun imagery is adopted from Book IV of Plato's *Republic*, and Plato's phrase "beyond being" [*epékeina ousías*] became the foundation for Plotinus's view that the One transcends ordinary reality.(5) Yet it should be noticed that the concept of transcendence in Plotinus does not necessarily imply a hierarchical relationship between the One and ordinary reality, but instead indicates that the One is "within" ordinary reality, at its very center. The notion of the One as being *within* ordinary reality is more consistent with a horizontal, rather a vertical, interpretation of the relationship between the *hypóstases*.

A second passage clearly shows how the One is at the center of both soul (*psychê*) and intellect (*noûs*).

> And if soul sometimes reasons about the right and good and sometimes does not, there must be in us Intellect which does not reason discursively but always possesses the right, and there must be also the principle and cause and God of Intellect. He is not divided, but abides, and as he does not abide in place he is contemplated in many beings, in each and every one of those capable of receiving him as another self, just as the centre of a circle exists by itself, but every one of the radii in the circle has its point in the centre and the lines bring their individuality to it. For it is with something of this sort in ourselves that we are in contact with god and are with him and depend upon him ; and those of us who converge towards him are firmly established in him.(6)

Discursive reasoning is clearly indicated here as a function of *psychê*, while *noûs* "possesses" the good and the right without having to reason about it. The phrase "he is contemplated in many beings" directly relates to Plotinus's adaptation of the Aristotelian concept of *theoría*, which, despite the etymological similarity, means almost the exact opposite of the English word "theorizing" and

is better translated as "contemplation." Contemplation, for Plotinus, begins in the everyday aspects of reality precisely because the divine (i. e., the three *hypóstases* of *psychê*, *noûs*, and the One) is already present in ordinary reality, not only in the world of nature, but also in ourselves. In other words, since everything that exists is suffused with the One, the divine can be discovered both within nature and within the individual self through contemplation. If the One is at the center of all that exists, then the way to find the One is not by looking "outside" of ordinary experience towards the supernatural (i. e., vertically from lower to higher), but by looking within nature and within oneself (i. e., horizontally from outer to inner).

The third passage further illustrates the divinity of *psychê* circling around the One at the center.

> If then a soul knows itself for the rest of the time, and knows that its movement is not in a straight line, except when there is a kind of break in it, but its natural movement is, as it were, in a circle around something, something not outside but a centre, and the centre is that from which the circle derives, then it will move around this from which it is and will depend on this, bringing itself into accord with that which all souls ought to, and the souls of the gods always do; and it is by bringing themselves into accord with it that they are gods.(7)

Since individual souls, for Plotinus, are manifestations of the one supreme soul, human souls too circle around the One and are therefore "divine." The same conclusion holds again for the indwelling presence of *psychê* in nature. *Enneads* V. 1. 10 speaks of the three *hypóstases* as being present in both nature and the human soul: "... just as in nature there are these three of which we have spoken, so we ought to think that they are present also in ourselves."(6) *Enneads* II. 2. 2 specifically links the pervasiveness of the One with the image of a circle: "If God is in all things, the soul which desires to be with him must move around him."(9)

Yet the One's very omnipresence means that rather than speak metaphorically of the One as the center around which all else revolves, it would be more philosophically correct to say, as Plotinus does in *Enneads* V. 5. 9, that the One *encompasses* all that exists. That is, it is more accurate to say that everything is in the One, not that the One is in everything:

> ... Soul is not in the universe, but the universe in it: for body is not the soul's place, but Soul is in Intellect and body in Soul, and Intellect in something else; but there is nothing other than this for it to be in: it is not, then, in anything; in this way therefore, it is nowhere. Where then are the other things? In it.(10)

If we were to construct a schematic image on the basis of this passage, the One would become a circle which encircles everything else — or even better, simply the boundless surface on which the other circles are drawn. Nonetheless, the relationship between the all-embracing circle of the One and the various inner circles would still be "horizontal" rather then "vertical." But then, instead of speaking of the One as the "center" of existence, we might be more inclined to speak of it as the "ground" of existence.(11)

While Tomasic notes the divergence between the vertical and horizontal interpretations, he does

not elaborate on its implications, except to note the connection between the horizontal model and Neoplatonic mysticism:

> Imagine again the One as the center, the separate but proximate sphere of noetic or intellectual activities circumscribing the One, and the further sphere of *Psychê* encircling *Noûs*. In the realm of metaphorical space, all centers must coincide since there can be no spatial distance or qualitative distinction. It follows, therefore, that the center of our own self-identity coincides with the One, occupying the same "place" and would have the same characteristic and function. One's own self-identity, one's own center, must be construed as "transcendent" and "immanent" and be undifferentiated from the One — equally a focal point of mystical concern.(12)

The notion that the center of the self is identical with the center of the One is fully developed in *Enneads* VI. 9. 8. Because Plotinus presents these ideas in connection with the circle imagery, the passage is worth quoting here at some length:

> Every soul that knows its history is aware, also that its movement, unthwarted, is not that of an outgoing line; its natural course may be likened to that in which a circle turns not upon some external but on its own centre, the point to which it owes its rise. The soul's movement will be about its source; to this it will hold, poised intent towards that unity to which all souls should move and the divine souls always move, divine in virtue of that movement; for to be a god is to be integral with the Supreme; what stands away is man still multiple, or beast.
>
> Is then this "centre" of our souls the Principle for which we are seeking?
>
> We must look yet further: we must admit a Principle in which all these centres coincide: it will be a centre by analogy with the centre of the circle we know. The soul is not a circle in the sense of the geometric figure but in that it at once contains the Primal Nature [as centre] and is contained by it [as circumference], that it owes its origin to such a centre and still more that the soul, uncontaminated, is a self-contained entity.
>
> In our present state — part of our being weighed down by the body, as one might have the feet under water with all the rest untouched — we bear ourselves aloft by that intact part and, in that, hold through our own centre to the centre of all the centres, just as the centres of the circles of a sphere coincided with that of the sphere to which all belong. Thus we are secure.(13)

The difference between the horizontal and vertical schematizations is not simply a choice, as Tomasic seems to imply, between two equally valid interpretations of Plotinus, either of which would lead to roughly the same philosophical results. There is indeed a tension in Plotinus's philosophy between the view that one "ascends" away from the pure negativity of matter towards the light of the One and the seemingly contrary view that through the emanation process the One becomes manifest in all that truly exists. But this tension is not a contradiction; it is simply a reflection of the contrasting ways of describing, on the one hand the One's creative outpouring in the emanation process and on the other, the return of that which has been emanated to its source. The word "ascends" does not imply a metaphysical dualism between that which is higher and that which is

lower, i. e., between the "otherworldly" and the "this-worldly." Rather, the dualism in Plotinus's thought is between multiplicity and unity (— a dualism which Plotinus ultimately resolves, of course, in his conception of the One). Multiplicity divides the whole of reality into separate parts. A part is not the whole, and is in that sense "inferior" to it, yet the individual part is also part of the whole — that is, an instance of it — and so by knowing the part one also knows something of the whole.[14] As with the Zen proverb, "By drinking one handful of water from the sea, one knows what the whole sea tastes like."

Plotinus's metaphysics thus provides the basis for his epistemology. Discursive knowledge is appropriate for considering reality in terms of its parts, but totally inadequate for understanding the One. The One is known not through discursive knowledge, but rather through intuitive experience. This experience is possible because, if the One is present in everything, it is also present in ourselves.

> ... [T]he good is rightly said to be our own; therefore one must not seek it outside. For where could it be if it had fallen outside being? Or how could one discover it in non-being? But it is obvious that it is in being, since it is not non-being. But if that good is being and in being, it would clearly be for each individual in himself. We have not, then, departed from being, but are in it, nor has it departed from us; so all things are one.[15]

Intuitive knowledge is not propositional, precisely because the One itself is ineffable. Thus, intuitive knowledge does not result in a fixed set of doctrines, teachings, or theological statements — "truth" as it is typically understood. Rather, it is experiential, coming directly out of the individual's experience of the One. Its basis is not in *thinking*, because thought is always of something else, but in *being*. Since God and the self coincide in one single metaphysical reality, the way to know God is to know oneself.

Intuition and Christian Theology. Christianity has historically tended to hold a "vertical" view of the relationship between God and humanity, and between God and nature, yet there are instances of Christian thinkers and mystics who have advocated a more "horizontal" view. Mainstream Catholic and Protestant thought maintains a vertical, dualistic distinction between God "up there" and humanity "down here" (understood in a metaphorical rather than a literal sense). God's omnipresence is acknowledged, yet considerably more emphasis is placed on God's transcendence than on his immanence, and the more radical implications of an immanent view of God are rejected as pantheistic. A sharp distinction between God and his creation is maintained, and the notion that any part of creation could ever be regarded as fully "divine" is explicitly rejected.

While the vertical approach enabled Christianity to insist that God is fully transcendent to the world, other various ontological splits inevitably resulted, such as those between the divine and the human, the sacred and the secular, the spirit and the flesh, and so on — splits which a more monistic and horizontal approach would avoid. In the vertical view, the source of all spiritual value is located "outside" of nature and of the self, rather than within. As a consequence, God becomes "alienated" from both the world and from the self. But by alienating divinity from nature and the self and investing it in a superior being, the value of the human and the material is correspondingly

depreciated. All goodness resides in God; humanity is seen as totally depraved and in a state of original sin.

The moral problem (discussed in detail in Part I) posed by this view is that humanity cannot begin to take real responsibility for the world if humankind is looked at as essentially powerless and, moreover, if final responsibility is viewed as remaining with an all-powerful, all-good God who is ultimately "in charge." Moreover, "this-worldly" concerns — referring here less to the pursuit of opulence than to the attempt to create a better and more just social order — are devalued in favor of the otherworldly. Instead of attempting to realize the fullness of life here and now both through self-actualization and by working to create a "better world," the soul longs to leave the physical world of pain and suffering, and to enter heaven. (The vertical view is preserved in the popular representation of heaven as "up" and hell as "down.") When the vertical view becomes extreme, Christianity indeed becomes, in Nietzsche's words, "life-denying" rather then "life-affirming." A this-worldly celebration of the physical world is replaced by a psychologically repressive denigration of physical pleasure. Denying the body through ascetic practices replaces a wholistic concern for both the spiritual and physical aspects of existence. The flesh is mortifed in order to liberate the spirit. Sexual union is sublimated into "mystical" union, and the "mysticism" which results is not a this-worldly reuniting of spirit and matter, of soul and body, but a transcendence of nature and self into the otherwordly.(16)

A vertical view of Christianity also preserves the traditional Chiristian notion of revelation. If God is seen as transcendent to the world, he needs a means of communicating to humankind. He accomplishes this by transmitting his word through the law and the prophets, the holy scriptures, and ultimately, as Christianity teaches, through Christ as the divine *logos*, or incarnate Word. God, as the supreme authority at the top of the ontological hierarchy of being, gives his law which humanity must obey. (The notion of God as "King," and therefore ultimate authority, is fully consistent with a vertical view.) But since humans are unable to fulfill God's commandments, they stand in need of salvation. This salvation cannot come from humans themselves because humanity, which is viewed as sinful rather than divine by nature, is unable to effect its own salvation — humans cannot, to rephrase it in Buddhist terms, reach enlightenment on their own by being "lamps unto their own paths." Salvation can only come from the "outside," that is, from God in the form of the incarnate Christ, who is the model of perfect humanity. Humans may aspire to his perfection, but since they can never attain it, they must be saved through grace. Christ then becomes a savior to those who are incapable of saving themselves. In gratitude, the savior becomes an object of adoration, worship, and devotion.(17)

The dualistic split between God and humankind thus yields a religion which is centered not on the inner realization of the divine but on devotion to a savior who is regarded as uniquely divine. The Church becomes the guardian of this religion and preserves itself by constructing doctrines and creeds which members are expected to give assent to. The vertical view of the relationship between God and humanity is replicated in the hierarchical structure of the medieval Church, which takes its "authority" from God. Truth is conceived as dogmatic rather then intuitive, verbal rather than ineffable, objective rather than subjective, catholic rather than personal. The existence of the divine is not self-evident, as known through direct inner experience, but must be defended with

"proofs for the existence of God." Moreover, truth is regarded as inaccessible to those who are outside the Church or who have not committed themselves to the Christ-figure. As a result, the missionary zeal to "spread the gospel" is capable of disintegrating into an arrogant belief in Christianity's superiority and a condescending attitude towards other "pagan" religions.

The vertical approach is thus ultimately self-defeating: once the divine has been removed from the this-worldly and relegated to a "higher realm," it is simply a matter of time before the divine loses its meaning altogether. Metaphysically severed from the world of immediate experience, God becomes irrelevant. Or as Nietzsche's Zarathustra proclaimed, "God is dead." We are left with a sterile, materialistic universe devoid of meaning. An overemphasis on God's transcendence has the ironic effect of undermining rather than preserving spiritual values. By making values dependent on the existence of a transcendent God, these values are regarded as invalid once this God can no longer be believed in. Instead of investing all our spiritual resources in a transcendent God, we must rediscover them within the world we inhabit and within ourselves. That is, the *immanence* of the divine must be rediscovered.

While the vertical approach yields a religious outlook which is supernatural, otherworldly, devotional, dogmatic, and hierarchical, a horizontal approach yields the opposite — that is, an outlook which is naturalistic, this-wordly, experiential, intuitive, and egalitarian. Is a horizontal approach to Christianity possible, however? I would suggest that it indeed is, and moreover that it can be constructed out of insights derived from the more radically mystical traditions of Christianity itself. Formulating a new theology along these lines would require a considered rereading of the history of Christian thought, however, since many of these insights have been forgotten, overlooked, or underemphasized in the past. Traditional doctrines may also need to be reinterpretted and alternative doctrines considered, leading us, inevitably perhaps, beyond certain classic formulations into directions which will be at variance with traditional — and typically vertical — theological outlooks. Insufficient space precludes giving a detailed account of what a horizontal Christian theology might look like, so what follows can only be a brief sketch.

First of all, it is interesting to note that the Christian mystical tradition which arose out of Neoplatonism was kept alive more in Eastern Orthodoxy than in the Roman West. The declaration of Athanasius that "God became man that we might be made god" was preserved in Eastern Orthodoxy in the doctrine of *theosis* or the "deification" of human beings. *Theosis* has been part of the teaching of the Eastern Orthodox Church throughout its history, moreover not as something specially reserved for "mystics," but as an essential part of Christian experience for all believers. In *The Orthodox Church*, Timothy Ware specifically links deification to both God's transcendental and immanent aspects:

> The idea of deification must always be understood in the light of the distinction between God's essence and His energies. Union with God means union with the divine energies, not the divine essence: the Orthodox Church, while speaking of deification and union, rejects all forms of pantheism.[18]

The phrase "God's essence" refers to the transcendental, unknowable aspect of divinity which can

only be spoken of negatively through apophatic theology, while the phrase "God's energies" refers to the immanent, accessible aspect of the divine, which while fully present in the world, is nonetheless also fully divine.

The divine which is experienced by the individual, while a true instance of divinity, cannot be the whole of divinity, however. Again, as with the Zen proverb, we do not drink the whole sea but only a handful. The spark within the individual is not the whole fire, but it is fire just the same. Transcendence in this sense does not involve the positing of a transcendent God, but rather means that the individual is willing to recognize the sparks in others and in nature, i. e., in that which lies outside the self. Transcendence and immanence are thus simply two different ways of describing the same reality, since immanence is equally the view that the divine sparks are truly present in all that exists, i. e., including that which lies outside the self. It would seem, however, that such a perception of the "divine in all" precludes the possibility of making the divine into a separate entity, a crude "personal God." God is personal in the sense that divinity is particularized in individuals, but would it not be idolatrous to limit God to a particular image — physical, mental, or otherwise? Apophatic theology preserves the transcendence of the divine by negating all attributes given to him — including, it would seem, the attribute of being a "personal God." Whether Orthodoxy would accept this conclusion is doubtful, of course, but it does seem to be a logical extension of apophatic theology.

The distinction between the divine essence and divine energies arose in connection with the Hesychast controversy of the fourteenth century and was resolved by the Eastern Orthodox theologian Gregory Palamas, whom we have mentioned previously in Part I. Ware points out in his discussion of the controversy that the "way of negation," or of apophatic theology, is not inconsistent with the "way of union," that is, direct mystical experience.[19] Moreover, they are merely two means to the same end. The repetition of the Jesus Prayer ("Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me") by the Hesychasts became a form of prayer which involved not just the mind, but the whole body. This type of meditation, extremely close both to Plotinus's *theoría* (contemplation) and some Buddhist forms of meditation,[20] resulted in a mystical vision of the Divine Light, identified with the light of Christ's transfiguration. The constant repetition of the prayer was used as a means to go beyond mere verbalization towards a direct, non-conceptual religious experience. Palamas defended the resulting vision as an experience of God's energies (i.e., divine immanence), but not of his essence (i. e., divine transcendence). Mystical experience and apophatic theology are thus reconciled, since the divine is indeed capable of being experienced, yet the experience itself is non-conceptual.

Ware also suggests that the doctrine of deification involves not only retaining man's "full personal integrity," but also the physical body : "Since man is a unity of body and soul, and since the Incarnate Christ has saved and redeemed the whole man, it follows that 'man's body is deified at the same time as his soul.' "[21] The idea that redemption involves the whole body, and by extension the whole physical universe, is a powerful antidote to an exclusively otherworldly interpretation of Christianity — and, it might be added, to the negative evaluation given to matter by Plotinus. The deification process is something which begins here and now in this life and this world, not in a future paradise where everything is suddenly and miraculously made perfect. This appreciation for physical reality

also stands in stark contrast to ascetic ideals. Suffering is natural and should be accepted as a natural feature of existence. On the one hand, it need not be artificially induced through ascetic practices, and on the other, it need not be artificially avoided through overindulgence. The "middle way" for Christianity lies in the union of spirit and flesh, avoiding the extremes of both self-mortification and indulgence.

Theosis depends on a Christology which sees Christ as both fully human and fully divine, a fusion of the two natures in one entity. In the early Christological controversies, Orthodoxy defended itself against each of the various formulations which sought to make Christ either less than fully human or less than fully divine. It was precisely the claim that the human Jesus was one with the transcendent God which proved troublesome for Judaism. Yet because the doctrine of the Incarnation stressed the immanence of the divine in Christ, it mitigated the view that God is wholly transcendent. By reuniting divinity and humanity in Christ the doctrine represents an advance over the tendency to make a sharp dualistic split between the divine and the human. Yet the Incarnation remains problematic if it is understood as a totally unique event. If the union of divinity and humanity is exclusively unique to Christ, the deification process cannot take place in any other individuals. In other words, the divine is once again located outside rather than within each individual, and Christ becomes an object of devotion rather than the archetype of the divinity available to all.

The universality of religious experience is also lost in such a formulation, since a unique incarnation can only take place at a specific historical moment and in a specific geographical locale. The universality Plotinus spoke of — in which "... all men instinctively affirm the god in each of us to be one, the same in all" — is lost.[22] Instead of being regarded as a universal religion accessible to all people everywhere through direct intuitive knowledge, Christianity becomes bound to a particular cultural, historical, and geographic setting; it is transmissible to other settings only through missionary efforts. Direct mystical experience, however, is by definition not transmissible and must therefore be regarded as totally devoid of any particular historical or cultural contents. Thus, "knowing Christ" may be a sufficient condition for salvation, but it cannot be a necessary one if religious truth is ultimately regarded as experiential rather than cultural. Missionary work may indeed be a way to awaken religious consciousness in people who might not be awakened otherwise, but there could also be other ways in which this spiritual consciousness might be activated — ways which need not be specifically tied to the Christian tradition.

The mysticism we have been describing here is decidedly non-dualistic. That is, it bases mystical knowledge not on external props, such as revelation or the authority of the Church, but rather on direct inner experience, which is in principle accessible to everyone. The method of acquiring mystical knowledge is not through revelation, but through contemplation. Whereas the more orthodox mystics, such as Teresa and Bernard, saw their mystical experiences in typically dualistic fashion as a uniting of two opposites, the human and the divine — or as a "marriage" between the individual soul and the transcendental God — other mystics were drawn to the notion that God was not to be found "out there" as a transcendent diety one has a "relationship" with, but rather "in here" as part of a contemplative experience.

Eckhart is probably the best known of the latter type of mystic. In his sermon, "The Love of

God," Eckhart gives a characteristic metaphorical reading of the text, "God sent his only only begotten Son into the world" :

> [B]y that you must not understand the external world, in which he ate and drank with us, but you should know that it refers to the inner world. As sure as the Father, so single in nature, begets his Son, he begets him in the spirit's inmost recess — and that is in the inner world. Here, the core of God is also my core ; and the core of my soul, the core of God's. . . .[23]

In Eckhart's view God and humans share the same core, or center. God is light, but humans possess a spark of this light (our innate potential). Our own creaturely ideas and desires, however, prevent us from fully realizing the potential of the God within. Therefore we must empty ourselves of these desires through detachment. The process of emptying ourselves, however, brings us face to face with a void, and the temptation is to immediately fill this void once again with our own thoughts and desires. However, if we persist in keeping ourselves empty, the spark within us will continue to grow. This spark is itself God, and as the "God beyond God," it is the God beyond all ideas and limitations. Therefore the God within us is infinite, and the spark within us is capable of growing infinitely. The infinite growth of the spark means that the self-realization process is endless — which for Eckhart becomes the metaphorical meaning of eternal life.[24]

Even though mystical experience is ultimately personal, it is never an end in itself but always a means towards both individual and social transformation. If mysticism is nothing more than a form of spiritual "masturbation," it is of interest only to the person who has it. Eckhart, unlike many other medieval mystics, consistently rejected ecstacy as an essential component of mysticism. The goal of mystical experience is not to simply "feel good" but, in Biblical terms, to "bear fruit." The transformation is first of all personal. One is "born again." In metaphorical terms, the creature-self (ego) dies as the God-self (the authentic self) is resurrected. But since humans live in a social and ecological environment, the transformation also extends beyond the isolated individual. We are, as Christ said, the salt of the earth. Redemption involves the entire world — a process Eastern Orthodoxy refers to as "cosmic redemption."[25] Thus mysticism contains within itself not only the basis for personal transformation, but also the basis for social, cultural, and political transformation — a feature totally missing in the otherworldly forms of Western mysticism and often underemphasized in the mysticisms of the Orient as well.

The dualism typical of traditional Western philosophy and theology has forced us to regard values either as totally objective and universally valid, or as purely subjective and valid only for the individual who holds them. In rejecting this dualism, however, we must not only reject the notion that values are dependent on the existence of a transcendent, personal God, but also the notion that values are "merely human" and simply a matter of personal choice. Values have their source in human experience and in the unfolding of human potential. This experience is not purely individual, however, but also communal (linking us with other individuals), and cosmic (linking us with our physical environment and the universe as a whole). Our conception of divinity, then, must not be one which locates the divine outside of this total reality, but instead, within it. Plotinus shows us one way in which a sense of immanence can be rediscovered.

NOTES

(1) For a fuller discussion of cross-influences between Neoplatonism and Oriental thought, *cf*. Emile Brêhier, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, trans. Joseph Thomas (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), chapter VII, "The Orientalism of Plotinus," and the various articles in *Neoplatonism and Indian Thought*, ed. R. Baine Harris (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982). The logical problems of negative theology, mysticism, and language, are discussed in several articles collected in *The Structure of Being: A Neoplatonic Approach*, ed. R. Baine Harris (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982).

(2) Thomas Michael Tomasic, "Neoplatonism and the Mysticism of William of St.-Thierry" in *An Introduction to the Medieval Mystics of Europe*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), p. 54.

(3) In addition to those quoted in this paper, other striking passages which refer to the circle imagery include *Enneads* II. 2. 1 (used in relation to Plotinus's cosmology), III. 2. 3, IV. 1. 1., IV. 2. 1, IV. 7. 6 (used with reference to sense perception), VI. 5. 5, and VI. 8. 18.

(4) Plotinus, *Enneads* I. 7. 1, trans, A. H. Armstrong, vol. 1 of the Loeb Classical Library edition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966-1988), p. 271.

(5) The relevant passage from Book IV of Plato's *Republic* was quoted in "Plotinus and the Intuitive Tradition of the West- I," p. 39. *Enneads* VI. 4. 7 presents the image of a sun at the center with no body as such, but its light present everywhere.

(6) *Enneads* V. 1. 11, trans. Armstrong, vol. 5, pp. 49-51.

(7) *Enneads* VI. 9. 8, trans. Armstrong, vol. 7, p. 331.

(8) *Enneads* V. 1. 10, trans. Armstrong, vol. 5, p. 47. The following statements in the same treatise explicitly state the divinity of both nature and the human soul: "... our universe is a god by the agency of this soul" (V. 1. 2); and "[o]ur soul then also is a divine thing...." (V. 1. 10); For a full discussion of the divinity of nature and the self, *cf*. A. Hilary Armstrong, "The Apprehension of Divinity in the Self and Cosmos in Plotinus," in *The Significance of Neoplatonism*, ed. R. Baine Harris (Norfolk: International Society for Neoplatonic Studies, 1976).

(9) *Enneads* II. 2. 2, trans. Armstrong, vol. 2, pp. 47-49. This quote is preceded by yet another depiction of the soul circling God and is followed in II. 2. 3 with a further expression of the indwelling presence of *psychê* in nature: "... there is the ultimate power of soul which begins at the earth and is interwoven through the whole universe...."

(10) *Enneads* V. 5. 9, trans. Armstrong, vol. 5, p. 185. The connection between the idea that the One is both "everywhere" and "nowhere" and the notion that the One "fills all things" is also strongly made in *Enneads* III. 9. 4.

(11) Another possible schematization, and one which reconciles vertical and horizontal perspectives, is the popular religious symbol of a mountain: the higher one ascends, the closer one moves towards the center.

(12) Tomasic, p. 56.

(13) *Enneads*, VI. 9. 8, trans. Stephen MacKenna and B. S. Page, (Chicago: William Benton, 1952), p. 358.

(14) Pistorius in particular emphasizes the continuity between the three *hypóstases*, arguing that the One itself is a multiplicity in unity and therefore cannot be regarded as an entity which is separate from its own emanations. *Cf*. Philippus Villiers Pistorius, *Plotinus and Neoplatonism* (Cambridge: Bowes and Bowes, 1952), pp. 23-26.

(15) *Enneads* VI. 5. 1, trans. Armstrong, vol. 6, p. 329.

(16) "Life-denial" is not only a feature of Western asceticism, but is also found in the ascetic traditions of Eastern religions, such as Hinduism and Jainism.

(17) Devotional forms of religion are found in nearly all religious traditions, including those Eastern religions, which are typically, but erroneously, thought of in the West as being exclusively mystical and intuitive. In Buddhism, for example, serious practitioners vow to *become* Bodhisattvas, or Buddhist saviors, that is, they aspire to embody

the Bodhisattva spirit in their own lives — a thoroughly mystical approach which attempts to incorporate the "divine" into the human individual. In the popular imagination, however, Bodhisattvas are regarded as objects of devotion which can be prayed to in time of need; that is, Bodhisattvas are seen as powerful figures which "help" human beings through supernatural intervention. Instead of aspiring to *become* Bodhisattvas and to embody the divine within their own humanity, suppliants take the easier route of devoting themselves to beings "outside" as a means of compensating for their own human frailty and lack of power.

(18) Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1983), p. 237.

(19) *Cf. ibid.*, pp. 70-81.

(20) The repetition of the words of the Jesus Prayer is not unlike the repetition of the *namu-amida-butsu* ("Adoration for Amida Buddha") in Shin Buddhism, and produces very similar spiritual effects. *Cf.* D. T. Suzuki, *Mysticism Christian and Buddhist* (London: Mandala Books, 1979), pp. 114-118. The "silent meditation" of Zen (*zazen*) finds its parallel in Christian contemplation (Plotinus's *theoria*), defined as non-discursive mental prayer and often contrasted with meditation, or discursive mental prayer. Contemplation is of two kinds: *acquired* contemplation, which is achieved through individual spiritual exercises, and *infused* contemplation, which is experienced exclusively through God's grace. Contemplation remained primarily "mental" in Western Christianity. The Eastern Orthodox tendency to emphasize the body as well as the mind in contemplative experience is throughly consistent with the doctrine of *theosis*, i. e., the view of the deified individual as both divine and human.

(21) Ware, p. 237. The subquotation is from the seventh century Orthodox theologian, Maximus, who wrote commentaries on the works of the Christian Neoplatonist, Pseudo-Dionysius. Ware adds that the preservation of individual personality is "... unlike the eastern religions which teach that man is swallowed up in the diety." Not all forms of Eastern mysticism deny individual personality, however.

(22) *Enneads* VI. 5. 1, trans. MacKenna and Page, p. 305.

(23) *Meister Eckhart : A Modern Translation*, trans. Raymond Blakney (New York: Harper and Row, 1941), p. 126.

(24) The notions of the "void" and of "emptying oneself" are also found in Buddhism. *Cf.* Suzuki's discussion of Eckhart in *Mysticism Christian and Buddhist*, pp. 1-25. Plotinus also speaks of stripping away accretions and cleansing oneself of the "rust" which prevents us from discovering the pure soul within. *Cf. Enneads* IV. 7. 10.

(25) *Cf.* Ware, p. 240.

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PLOTINUS AND THE INTUITIVE TRADITION OF THE WEST (II)

Abstract

by Richard Evanoff

This article is the second of a two-part inquiry into the relationship between Plotinus and the intuitive philosophical tradition of the West. The article contrasts a "vertical," dualistic, and orthodox interpretation of Plotinus with a "horizontal," monistic, and mystical interpretation, and shows how the latter results in a more radically contemplative approach to religion. The article also speculates on how Christianity could have developed in more intuitive directions had the medieval Church not, as it typically did, rejected a more "horizontal" perspective.

プロティノスと西洋の直感哲学の伝統 (II)

摘 要

リチャード・エバノフ

本論はプロティノスと西洋の直盛哲学の伝統との関係を考察する二部からなる研究の第二部の部分である。本論では，“縦の”二元論と“横の”一元論的，神秘主義的な解釈とのプロティノスの正統派の解釈を対比する。そして，後者がいかに宗教に，より根本的にめい恵的な接近を結果としているかを示す。本論では，また，キリスト教が，もし，中世の教会が，異型的に“横の”見通しをより否認しなかったならば，どのように発展しえたかを推測する。